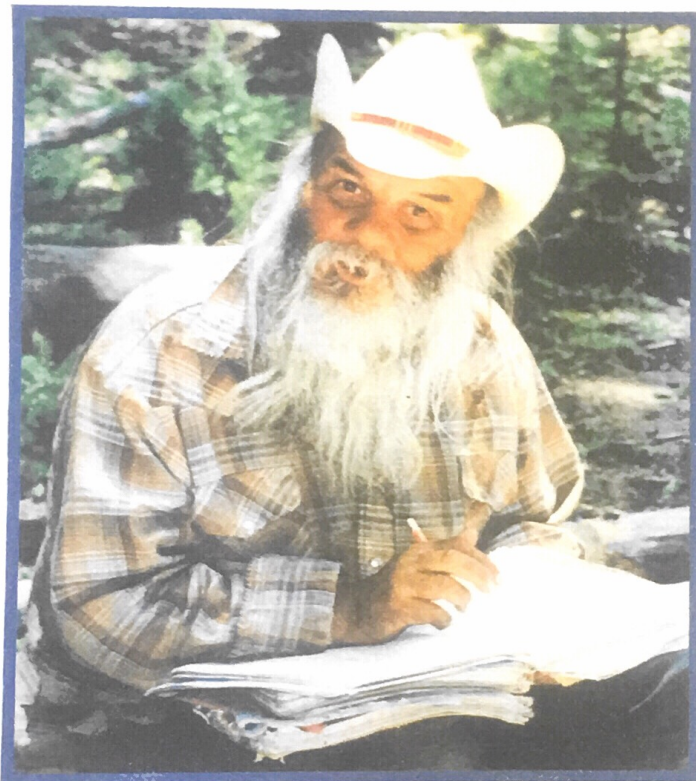


# Rainbow Family Life Stories

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*by Jodey Bateman.  
Interviews with Rainbow  
Family of Living Light  
folks conducted between  
1977 and 2008.*

*Scanned in 2018.  
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13. I ELIZA- "So Much Still To Get Into"

10 pages

[13. I]



## Eliza - So Much Still To Get Into

[Eliza's story could just as well be among the Oklahoma Rainbow stories. I met her in Norman, Oklahoma when she was eight years old. When she was twelve, her boyfriend was the son of Oro, who was later a key figure in Rainbow in Oklahoma. But her story has the end of the Rainbow House in it.]

I was born January 23, 1963 in Arlington, Texas. My mother was a housewife then. My dad was an engineer for LTV - some airplane company. When I was born, I already had two older brothers and we all lived together in one house. When I was like five, my mother and father started having pretty intense fights and I would sleep with my mother in her bed, and my father would sleep alone in mine. I didn't know it then, but my mother was doing lots of downers she got from our doctor - and alcohol. My father told me this. My mother doesn't know I know this. We were religious then and went to the Methodist church a lot. When I was six, my parents got divorced and my father married a woman he met in church. My father and his wife got together first on my bed before they married. They married in October, 1968. They are happily married - very happily. His wife is like a mother to me, and my mother has always resented that.

Then my mother and brothers and me moved into this big old house in Arlington and she had some friend who fixed her up with this guy who turned out to be an Indian redneck, and they got married. That didn't last more than a year. Two days before my seventh birthday, my mother came to school to pick me up. Her husband had freaked out and threatened to kill my older brother John with a knife because he wouldn't go to school. John was 12 then. He was getting into the Beatles. He would run off to Fort Worth and hide in these scraggly old houses above movie theaters and get lice and all.

We got our animals - a dog and a cat - and moved up with my mother's parents in Ohio to be safe from her husband. We lived there for a year and a half. My mother taught French in high school and went to bars a lot.

My brother John would come up to me and say, "Fuck you!" and I would say, "I'm telling," and he would laugh - all that kind of bullshit. Him and my oldest brothers would get me down and tickle me. They would say I loved it and I hated it. A Sagittarius brother.



I hated Ohio. It's full of old people. Not that I'm against old people, but it's a terrible place - nothing's happening. Then my mother met a rich Floridian named Larry who had three kids of his own and a maid. Larry and my mother got married and we moved to Akron.

That's where my brother John first smoked marijuana in 1970. He was 12 then and returned my mother on for the first time. Then he left - ran away to Fort Worth to be with his dad.

I lived in a room with my stepfather's youngest daughter. I didn't like her. We had an old lady babysitter who kept coming down on us. Finally I hit her and told her to fuck off. I was only seven then. I swear, I didn't want to hit her, but I did. She was real shocked and never baby sat with us again.

My mother had a lot of real serious fights with Larry, her husband. One real intense fight they had was because he was messing around with a neighbor lady. Us kids knew it. Us kids were running back and forth. It was really crazy. She got the electric knife out. She was coming down the stairs with it. We were watching. The knife wasn't plugged in, but it still could cut. Her husband flipped her down and had to rip off most of her clothes before he got the knife back. For some reason, he took her to the hospital. I guess she had overdosed on alcohol. Two months later, my brother John came back. He was 13. We packed up all our stuff in a car and John drove us to Midwest City, Oklahoma, and there we lived in a trailer house with my 50 year old bachelor cousin. We lived there for about four months. I went to school in Midwest City, the second grade. Then we moved to Del City, down the street from the trailer house and we lived in some apartments. John had quit school and he went back to school in Del City.

One of John's older friends brought over Dave, and Dave started living with my mother. They were all turning on and I didn't know it was marijuana. They told me it was Bull Durham. Then one day, a boy in my third grade class whose father was a cop brought a water pipe and drug samples to class and I said, "Wow! My brother makes pipes like that!"

John was a good boy then - always cleaning up the place as soon as he came home from school. Then they would have a big roaring party. Right after Dave got together with my mother, we decided to



move to Norman so my mother could go to the university there. My mother quit her job and that's when she became free.

There were a lot of people crashing at our house in Norman. My mother would be pissed off when she woke up in the morning and found somebody sleeping in her spot where she liked to sit.

I got turned on in Norman in 1971. I was eight. One night that summer, me and John and his friends Hans and Mark were sitting around the kitchen. They were tripping on acid. We had my mother's little water pipe made out of an ink bottle. I didn't want to smoke it at first, and then they told me how to draw in the air and hold it. They kept saying, "Did you get off?" I didn't know what they were talking about. Then they went to the sun room and really spaced out, and I wondered, "Am I supposed to act like that?"

After that, they would sneak me joints behind my mother's back. She didn't approve of me smoking. I didn't know what stoned was for a couple of months. I would smoke with Dee (not her real name), a girl friend. She'd get dope from her mother and I'd get it from my brother. When I met Dee, it was really cosmic. I was trucking home from school on my bicycle and I said, "Come over to my house," and she said, "I don't know - where do you live?" and it turned out she lived right across the street from me. Meeting her father was a trip. I went in her house and it smelled like dog shit and there was this long-haired hippie crashed out on the couch and that was her father. He was a probation officer. Me and Dee spent a lot of our time rolling joints. For five years, from age 8 to 13, we spent every possible moment together.

Then the heat came on real strong. People were coming to our house saying "Man, there's cops ready to bust you all with radar," and my mother got all the dope out of the house and we moved out to the country and I went to another school. Then Dee's parents moved out to the country and we went to the same school again. We had fun, fun. We were even tighter than ever.

Dee's father knew about most of the busts that were going on. The cops knew about my brother John and when John got busted, Dee's father would go get him out. John got busted a lot. Then we moved back into Norman. We lived close to Dee again.



John was into speed. So was my mother. She did white crosses so she could get her studies done, but my brother would hit it up. He stayed in a basement room and looked real dragged out.

Then we moved again to a big house in Norman. One night there was a 50-keg party in a park. My brother and his friend Mark went to it. The cops stopped their car to check ID's when they were coming out of the party. They were holding quaaludes and cocaine and marijuana. Just as the cop was letting them go, my brother was drunk out of his gourd. He yelled, "You dirty, no-good mother fucking pig!" and Mark got scared and dumped the drugs out of the window right in front of the cop. So they both went to jail and my mother and Mark's mother went to jail and got them out.

After that, we moved to a house in the country for a week. It was a real space-b-out trip, because we had raving parties all the time, and the land lady didn't like it. Then we moved to Country Club Apartments. That was pretty close to where Dee's mother lived, so I would meet Dee halfway and we'd go to her house and have big vegetarian dinners with wine and marijuana out the ass. I was about 11 then. I met some people I had been to school with and they were really into being delinquents. We smoked a lot of tobacco cigarettes together. One day we got a hold of some green spray paint and wrote FUCK NIXON and NIXON SUCKS under the windows.

I had a jealous boyfriend then. He yelled obscene things at me - called me a mother fucker. I slapped him and he fell into a swimming pool because he was being very turkey. After that, he ran upstairs to my apartment and he came up and spit on the door and threw bottles of wine at it. Eventually, he took a piece of glass and slit the tires of my mother's brand new car and scraped the paint job. Dave, my mother's boyfriend, had to go to the hospital then. He almost died because we couldn't get him to the hospital soon enough because the tires were slashed. My grandparents bought us new tires. That jealous boyfriend! That fucking kid! That brat! We were all brats then, spitting on each other's doors.



In the sixth grade I went with Daniel, Oro's son, for a while. He was the first kid in school to have long hair. Then we moved on Eufaula Street. Around Christmas, 1974, Dave moved away. My mother told him to move out. They were still getting together after that. Someone went to his house while he was spending the night at our house and burned his whole house down. He lived with us again. They found a 15-year-old Indian boy who set the house on fire. He was a pretty strange kid. I couldn't sleep at night because I was afraid he was going to come set our house on fire. They took the Indian kid for a hearing, but he got off because of his age.

We were like checking out Austin by that time. In late April '75 we moved to Austin. I had a real hard time at first. John's friend Hans came down with us. Then Sonny appeared at our door. He lived with us a couple of months. Then he broke into a restaurant and stole the money from the cigaret machine and he stole all the booze because we didn't have like any money at all. It was like our first weeks in Austin. Mom and Dave always had bad fights. One night right after Sonny ripped off the restaurant, him and Dave got real drunk. Sonny said he was going down to the river. Six hours later, we noticed our car wasn't there and the keys were gone. My mother went crazy without that car because one of our cats was dying. We went to the district attorney. He wouldn't help us out at all. He put down my mother for having Sonny as a boyfriend. He said if he pressed charges, Sonny would go to the pen. My mother didn't want that. A week later, Sonny appeared at our door and said he had wrecked the car in Georgetown, 30 miles away. He had been in jail for a week. The car was still impounded. Sonny said he would work and get the car out, but a few days later, my brother John came down from Norman and said he saw Sonny up there, going to Virginia. It took us three weeks to get the car back and it cost us a lot of money which we didn't have. The car is still fucked up.

We moved to Round Rock, about 20 miles from Austin. Wally from Norman lived with us. He went off real soon to the Arkansas Rainbow Gathering, but he didn't tell me anything about it. I had never heard of the Rainbow Family then.

New Year's 1976, we had a raving party, a blast. We must



I have had every freak in Round Rock there, around 300 people. We didn't tell anybody about it, but they all showed up. After we used up the keg of beer, we bought about 17 more cases. That's where I got into drinking Mad Dog wine and whiskey. Somebody at midnight spilled a bottle of Everclear on the carpet and decided to see what would happen.

It burned a perfect ring in the carpet. I put the fire out. I didn't say anything to my mother about it because she was so blitzed out when she saw it. We've spent so many mornings cleaning the house after parties.

January 21, 1976, was my thirteenth birthday. I quit public school that week and started to a free school about that time. The best school of my life. I got high on pot with all my teachers. We had some great classes. Dave left for Norman about this time. He left me half an ounce of pot, a dozen roses and all his records for my birthday. He left my mother \$20 under her booze bottle.

We moved back into Austin. Then Dave came to get his tool set and ended up staying with us again. I was so pissed off. I hated him then because I thought he was no good for my mother's head. He was a jealous boyfriend. He wouldn't let my mother have her freedom. I like him now he's not living with her.

In May, 1976, my mother, Dave and I were involved with these people who were very much into drugs. The friends met some narks who offered to turn them on to crystal meth in exchange for heroin. They came to our house to get it, but it wasn't heroin, it was tuenol. I was in my bedroom, smashed on margaritas. Robert, one of our friends, had to climb up to my second story bedroom window to wake me up. I let him in. Robert called my brother John in Norman to find out if it was all right. Then he took the pills across Austin to someone else's place and the narks busted him. The narks came back to our house. Dave and my mother had just gotten back. Dave smoked some pot with them. Three days later, the narks came back and busted all three of us. They opened the door before I could answer and shoved me against the wall. They shoved a search warrant in my face. I said I didn't know if anyone else was



home. Then they started into the bedrooms. I went "Mother, the pigs are here!" My mother and Dave had gone to bed. They weren't asleep, they had gone to bed. It was embarrassing when the cops found them naked. They took them to the city jail and took me to the juvenile jail. They confiscated everything I owned—including my rings. They gave me some clothes that didn't fit. My mother came and got me out the next day after they had me scrub floors. I was never so glad to see my mother.

My counsellor was going to charge me with drug dealing. I was just giving away a lot of mushrooms. I had so many I was giving them away. We had a lawyer—my mother's boss—who got us off for free and life went on.

About a month later I split and went to Oklahoma for a month. When I came back, they were living in a different place with the friends we got busted with. Summer 1976, we moved into another house with the same people. We were drinking lots of wine together. It was Cockroach City, Austin. We lived there for a while until my mother and Dave and I found another place and my mother found another lawyer to work for. We lived in that house for a year. I got a job at You Scream Ice Cream in that year, 1977. I was 14 then—my first job, making ice cream. After Christmas, 1977, I went to Colorado with some friends from Norman. Then I went to Pennsylvania with my father to visit his mother. I came back to Austin January, Friday 13, 1978. The minute I got to Austin, my good friend Sharon handed me a hit of orange sunshine at the airport. We went to a party. I was tripping my butt off, having a great time. I went home. My house was a pit, grime and filth everywhere. My friends tried to drag me away, but I stayed to clean up. You know how it is when you're tripping. I was too into my room and doing stuff that needed to be done.

I quit the free school. I wasn't into going anyways. I wasn't getting into all the energy and I wanted my job back. I talked with my father about getting a GED and going to college. I blew that off when I met Harmony from the Rainbow House and he



asked me to come to the Rainbow Gathering with him. So I worked for two months making ice cream and got into the Rainbow Family a lot - lots of good energy, good vibrations. I lived with Harmony for a couple of months at the Rainbow House. I felt kind of strange because that first night I stayed in the Rainbow House, I was in the room where the guy was killed.

Richard called Malcolm, the lawyer my mother works for, because Legal Aid told him Malcolm was a good lawyer about the eviction. My mother told me the times of the eviction hearings so I could go. A couple of times Richard closed the Rainbow House for spring cleaning and moved everybody out to the country to the land that somebody was letting the Rainbow Family use.

They've had five eviction hearings and it was decided at the Building Commissioners' meeting that they didn't have to split until after 30 days. Then in June after I left, they had ten days to appeal. My mother says the cops came and said they had 24 hours to get out the day before the appeal hearing, which was totally illegal. Everybody got scared and split. They all went to the gathering. The next day Malcolm lost the appeal. Poor Malcolm!

On May 24, 1978, I left Austin with Harmony on the bus Iron Butterfly number 42 - Rainbow Starship. We left with Richard and Michelle and Burl and Jo Ann and Crazy Eddie and Rainbow Bear. We left at six o'clock in the afternoon and got to the healing springs at Eden, Arizona, in a day and a half.

Next night we traveled to California. Memorial Day we blew two tires on the bus and paid for it with 50 of my bucks. We got into LA and stayed at a truck stop where I tripped on acid. It was all right. In the truck stop, we were turned on to 100 pounds of grapefruit and 100 pounds of garlic from overweight trucks. We had left Austin with 300 sacks of potato chips and assorted nuts and granola - which was crazy. I was so burnt out on potato chips. All the way to San Francisco we hit the beaches and gave away grapefruits and potato chips, which made a big hit on the beaches. We played our guitars and fiddles on the beach for people and gave invitations for



the gathering and asked for money to help us get to the gathering. We got \$10 in all.

We got to San Francisco on the bus and played music for the bus in Golden Gate Park Amphitheater. We got stoned on some good Colombian a brother gave us. He wanted to find out more about the gathering. He figured we were from the Rainbow Family and stopped to ask us. We played our music at Fisher man's Wharf and made \$20 and I met an old friend from Austin - the Feather Lady.

Then we left Glitter City over the bridge and went to Santa Rosa and sold 75 pounds of garlic for \$1 a pound, which gave us gas to go to Drain, Oregon. Our fiddle player left in Santa Rosa. We drove through the redwoods - beautiful fucking redwoods, man! We blew another tire. Burl and Jo Ann split and went to the gathering on their own. They didn't like the energy on the bus. We got the tire fixed and that night we got to Rainbow Farm in Drain, Oregon, where we were greeted with open arms and good food on the table.

We stayed there for a couple of days and then they went on a dumpster run to the supermarkets in Eugene for left over food. I stayed on the farm for a couple of weeks to help with planting and getting the house together for the gathering. I got a ride to the gathering at Umpqua National Forest and saw a huge 12-b and rainbow on the way.

Since I met Harmony, I missed my period for two weeks. I thought I was pregnant, which excited us both because we both like kids a lot. But then I had my period. The relationship is kind of frazzled now. I guess he's decided he wants to do other things. We don't talk any more. I wish we did.

Once in a while I've seen visions of things that are going to happen to me. I've seen them throughout my life. But at this gathering the spirit is so into me that I see them all the time. I was thinking earlier I would get a BMW and go to Europe and make a lot of money - which I wouldn't mind



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being still. But now I feel more that I would like to live in  
the mountains and raise kids - travel with kids, too. There's  
so many things I still have to get into.  
[As of 1982, Eliza was 19 and living by herself in Austin]